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WEEKLY UPDATE SERVICE 16/93

Contained in this weekly update is are external items on International Women's Day, Turkey and El Salvador.

NEWS INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL NEWS RELEASES

Japan - 0500 hrs gmt, 17 March

Please note the embargo is confirmed for 0500 hrs gmt, 17 March for this document on refugee issues and we anticipate a high level of media interest in this news release.

The Japanese Section is holding a press conference in Tokyo to launch the report on 17 March. IS staff member, David Petrasek, who wrote the report, is going to Tokyo to help with media there. The Japanese Section will be inviting international media to attend the press conference and the IS will also inform international media of the launch. Details of the conference will shortly be available from the IS press office if you need them.

An Electronic News Release (ENR) is being prepared at the last minute to go with the report. Unfortunately, resources and time will not allow the IS to distribute it to sections. However, it will be given to Japanese TV at the press launch and the IS is giving it to WTN, VISNEWS, BBC World Service TV and CNN - so please refer your media to these. The master copy is held at Dubbs, 25-26 Poland Street, London W1V 3DB - Tel: +44 71 629 0055. Media who urgently require the full ENR may order copies direct from Dubbs, paying the copying costs only.

Chad - 21 April

Please Note

The document to go with this campaign has been sent out to sections dated February. Please inform your section campaign coordinators and anyone else who may receive it that it is EMBARGOED FOR 21 APRIL.

Campaign, document, news release, Q&A and ENR. More details to follow shortly.

TARGETED AND LIMITED NEWS RELEASES

International Women's Day - 8 March

An item enclosed in this weekly update about AI's Women Activist Action, also focusing on a woman activist killed in Brazil - whose case has not received good publicity as yet.

Section Initiatives

French Section - European Press Officers' Meeting

The second European Press Officers' meeting will take place in Paris this year. The registration forms have not arrived yet, but when they do please send them to Luisa de Soriano or Josette Debord at the French Section Press Office before the end of February. The date of this meeting is now fixed for 15 and 16 May as the majority of you asked for. It will be focused on two themes: Audiovisual work (production and TV experiences) and how to improve it; and the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. The French Section Press Office will send the program to all participants during the last week of February. Many thanks.

**2. ACT 77/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
EMBARGOED FOR 8 MARCH 1993**

INTERNAL

This item refers to the appeal cases from the Women Activists Action (AI Index: ACT 77/02/93), but press officers might want to adapt the item according to which cases are high priority to their section. Please note that this item is also intended to bring attention to the case of Edméia da Silva Euzébio and Sheila da Conceição at the time of International Women's Day.

ADVICE TO EDITORS

ACT 77/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL

EMBARGOED FOR 8 MARCH 1993

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL URGES PROTECTION OF WOMEN ACTIVISTS

"The price women often pay for campaigning against injustice is yet more human rights abuses," said Amnesty International, launching an action on International Women's Day drawing attention to human rights violations against women activists worldwide.

"In countries all over the world, women who speak out against human rights abuses find themselves targeted -- they risk threats, persecution and even death for expressing their conscientiously-held beliefs," said the organization.

Amnesty International is also stepping up its call for the Brazilian Government to take action on the possible extrajudicial execution of two women -- one of whom denounced the military police on the "disappearance" of her son.

Edméia da Silva Euzébio and Sheila da Conceição were shot dead on 15 January in Rio de Janeiro, just nine days after Edméia da Silva Euzébio testified in a judicial inquiry into the "disappearance" of 11 youths, including her son, in which she allegedly denounced involvement of military and civil police officers.

The human rights organization believes that Edméia da Silva Euzébio may have been extrajudicially executed for speaking out about her son and is calling on the Brazilian government for a thorough and impartial investigation into her and Sheila da Conceição's death.

Amnesty International also fears for the safety of eight remaining mothers who have been campaigning with Edméia da Silva Euzébio on behalf of their "disappeared" sons. They have reportedly been harassed and threatened by military police and Amnesty International is urging the Brazilian government to take all necessary steps to protect them.

The organization's action highlights the cases of women who are activists in their various fields and have become victims of human rights violations:

- Aung San Suu Kyi, held under house arrest since July 1989 for her courageous non-violent opposition to the repressive military regime in Myanmar;
- Leyla Zana, threatened with death for her political activities and investigation into human rights violations against Turkey's Kurdish minority;
- Blanca Cecilia Valero de Duran, killed in circumstances suggesting extrajudicial execution following her human rights work denouncing violations by the military and paramilitary in Colombia;
- Maria Elena Cruz Varela, a political dissident imprisoned since November 1981 in Cuba, for writing what the Government called "offensive, slanderous pamphlets" - calling for public demonstrations and questioning the authority of the National Assembly;
- Nour Al-Houda Al-Bahr, a former-prisoner of conscience who was tortured for her political opposition to the Tunisian Government, whose allegations of torture have not been investigated.

Leading up to the UN World Conference on Human Rights in June, Amnesty International is urging that violations that particularly affect or are directed against women be urgently addressed. "Women, no less than other members of society, are entitled to fundamental rights and governments have a duty to protect them."

ENDS/

3. EUR 44/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL

2 March 1993

WEEKLY UPDATE**INTERNAL**

Following is an open letter sent to the Turkish Prime Minister, Süleyman Demirel, on 19 February 1993. Please use it to raise as much publicity as possible - as it is intended to try to prevent killings on the Kurdish Nevruz festival on 21 March.

EXTERNAL**TURKEY: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL URGES PRIME MINISTER TO PREVENT KILLINGS AT NEVRUZ**

Amnesty International sent the following letter to the Turkish Prime Minister, Süleyman Demirel, on 19 February, in anticipation of Nevruz - a festival celebrated by the large Kurdish minority in Turkey.

On Nevruz 1992, 91 people were allegedly killed by security forces firing indiscriminately at unarmed demonstrators and on residential areas.

One case was that of 15-year-old Nihat Cilasun, who, according to an eye-witness, was shot dead by the security forces as he ran towards his home carrying bread. This was during a curfew in the city of Cizre on 24 March 1992.

Police and gendarmerie (soldiers carrying out police duties) in southeast Turkey apparently use firearms - including automatic weapons, heavy machine guns, and mortars - as a first resort in handling civil disturbance.

Amnesty International has urgently appealed to the Prime Minister to ensure that security forces are equipped to use non-lethal forms of crowd control. The organization also urged that international standards regulating the use of firearms are strictly adhered to. These standards require, for example, that law enforcement officials shall, as far as possible, apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and firearms. They also require that whenever the lawful use of force and firearms is unavoidable, law enforcement officials shall "minimize damage and injury, and respect and preserve human life."

TEXT OF OPEN LETTER FROM AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL TO PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL

Sent - 19 February 1993

During 1991, 31 people died as a result of security forces firing on demonstrators who were in most cases reportedly unarmed, including one person who was killed during a gathering to celebrate *Nevruz*. During 1992, 91 people were killed, allegedly by security forces, at *Nevruz* demonstrations and during the curfews which followed. Twenty-six other people were killed during demonstrations throughout the rest of the year. We are writing today, in anticipation of this year's Nevruz on 21 March, to urge that steps be taken to prevent, during and after celebrations of Nevruz on 21 March this year, the fatalities which have marked the preceding two years.

Amnesty International has, on a number of occasions, expressed its concern about persistent reports that security forces opened fire on unarmed civilians during demonstrations and that they have fired, apparently at random, on residential areas of towns in southeast Turkey.

The organization notes that in the provinces under emergency legislation, demonstrations are often very unstable, and that Nevruz 1992 was preceded by rumours that the festival would be the occasion of a popular uprising. Such demonstrations are therefore accompanied by a great increase in tension. The organization also notes, however, that during the disturbances on 21 March 1992 firearms were apparently the primary tool used by security forces in controlling demonstrations, that these weapons were allegedly used against unarmed civilians, that there was heavy loss of life, and that there was subsequently no impartial investigation into the widespread allegations of unlawful killing of civilians by police and gendarmerie.

The United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials establish strict limitations on the use of force and firearms, require that where firearms are used, such use should be properly reported, and that abusive or unlawful use is punished. The UN Basic Principles state that "Law enforcement officials, in carrying out their duty, shall, as far as possible, apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and firearms. They may use force and firearms only if other means remain ineffective or without any promise of achieving the intended result" (Article 4), and that "Whenever the lawful use of force and firearms

is unavoidable, law enforcement officials shall exercise restraint in such use and act in proportion to the seriousness of the offence and the legitimate objective to be achieved" and that they shall "minimize damage and injury, and respect and preserve human life" (Article 5).

The UN Principles clearly state that firearms should only be used in self-defence or defence of others against the imminent threat of death or serious injury - that "the intentional lethal use of firearms may only be made when strictly unavoidable in order to protect life".

The UN Principles further state that law enforcement officials should give a clear warning of their intent to use firearms with sufficient time for the warning to be observed, unless to do so would unduly place the law enforcement officials at risk, or would create a risk of death or serious harm to other persons.

The UN Principles require that law enforcement officials should be issued with guidelines prescribing the types of firearms and ammunition permitted, ensuring that firearms are only used in appropriate circumstances, and prohibiting those firearms and ammunition that cause unwarranted injury or present an unwarranted risk. Amnesty International notes that in the days following Nevruz 1992 there were many credible reports, including documentary film, indicating that heavy machine guns, mortars and tank-mounted cannons were used during police operations.

Amnesty International therefore urges you to ensure that all security force members on duty in southeast Turkey at the time of Nevruz, when they may be faced with volatile and possibly provocative demonstrations, are informed of their responsibilities under the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, that they are properly equipped to exercise non-lethal forms of crowd control and with self-defensive equipment in order to decrease the need to use firearms. The organization also urges you to ensure that where firearms are used, the circumstances are fully reported, that allegations of improper use of firearms leading to loss of life or injury are thoroughly and impartially investigated and that those responsible are brought to trial. Amnesty International will be making public the text of this letter.

**4. AMR 29/WU 01/93 EXTERNAL
2 March 1993**

UPDATE TO AMR 29/WU 01/93: AI URGES AGAINST EXTENSION OF DEATH PENALTY

EL SALVADOR: PARLIAMENT DEFEATS MOTION TO EXTEND DEATH PENALTY

The motion to ratify a constitutional reform extending the application of the death penalty was defeated in the Salvadorian Legislative Assembly on 19 February 1993.

The vote on the motion followed a heated debate which is reported to have centred around the need for measures to combat violent crime, said to be on the increase since the end the country's civil war in 1992.

The defeated motion will now be studied by a parliamentary commission. Prior to the vote, Amnesty International had conveyed its concerns to the President of the Legislative Assembly and to Assembly deputies of all parties, urging them to vote against the motion.